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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/725,373	12/03/2003	Jeffrey Schlom	38163-0197	5890

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OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
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EXAMINER

DIBRINO, MARIANNE NMN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1644

DATE MAILED: 06/13/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/725,373

Applicant(s)

SCHLOM ET AL

Examiner

DiBrino Marianne

Art Unit

1644

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 March 2003 and 11 March 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 47-56 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 47-56 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☒ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>12/3/03</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Art Unit: 1644

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's amendments filed 12/3/03 and 3/11/05 are acknowledged and have been entered.
2. Applicant has canceled the claims to which the Examiner's requirement for election/restriction mailed 1/12/05 were directed. Newly filed claims 47-56 are drawn to a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleic acid sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NO: 2, 3, 4 and 5, vector, host cell and kit comprising said nucleic acid molecule, said vector further comprising at least one HLA class I molecule and said kit further comprising an immunostimulatory molecule.

With regard to newly filed claims 47-56, Applicant's preemptive election of the species of SEQ ID NO: 2 in Applicant's said amendment filed 3/11/05 is acknowledged.

Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP 818.03(a)).

Claims 47-56 read on the elected species, SEQ ID NO: 2, and are currently being examined.

3. It is noted that this application appears to claim subject matter disclosed in prior copending Application No. 09/529,121 and 60/061,589.

A reference to the prior applications must be inserted as the first sentence of the specification of this application if applicant intends to rely on the filing date of the prior application under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) or 120. See 37 CFR 1.78(a). Also, the current status of all nonprovisional parent applications referenced should be included. Applicant should amend the first line of the specification to update the status (and relationship) of the priority documents.

The first sentence of the specification should refer to the provisional application using language such as:

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/____, filed _____. See MPEP 1302.04. If a statutory reference is included in this statement, it must be to 35 USC 119(e) and not to 35 USC 120.

Art Unit: 1644

4. The oath or declaration is defective. A new oath or declaration in compliance with 37 CFR 1.67(a) identifying this application by application number and filing date is required. See MPEP 602.01 and 602.02.

The oath or declaration is defective because: there are changes to the residence and post office addresses of Inventor Barzaga that are not initialed and dated, and the filing date of application serial number 09/529,121 is not given.

5. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

a. "Figure 3" in the Brief Description of the Drawings should be "Figure 3 A-B".

b. The address for ATCC on page 30 at line 9 is incorrect. Note the correct address: American Type Culture Collection, 10801 University Boulevard, Manassas, VA 20110-2209

Appropriate correction(s) is/are required.

6. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

7. Claims 52-55 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

This is a new matter rejection.

The amendatory material that is not supported by the specification and claims as originally filed is as follows: The kit comprising a vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 47 and further comprising an immunostimulatory molecule, including GM-CSF. Applicant points to support for the newly filed claims on page 20 at line 1 through page 21, line 26 and in the claims as originally filed.

The originally filed disclosure is to a vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising an agonist peptide such as one of SEQ ID NO: 1-5, and a nucleic acid molecule encoding at least one class I molecule. Originally filed disclosure is also to a kit comprising an agonist peptide, a vector comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding CEA, and an immunostimulatory molecule, or to a kit comprising an antagonist peptide alone or in combination with an immunosuppressive agent.

Art Unit: 1644

There is no disclosure of a kit comprising a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding an agonist peptide, including one further encoding an immunostimulatory molecule such as GM-CSF.

8. Claims 47-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

The specification does not provide adequate written description of the claimed invention. The legal standard for sufficiency of a patent's (or a specification's) written description is whether that description "reasonably conveys to the artisan that the inventor had possession at that time of the . . . claimed subject matter", Vas-Cath, Inc. V. Mahurkar, 19 USPQ2d 1111 (Fed. Cir. 1991). In the instant case, the specification does not convey to the artisan that the Applicant had possession at the time of invention of the claimed nucleic acid molecule, vector, host cell and kit thereof recited in the instant claims.

The instant claims encompass a nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence of one of SEQ ID NO: 2-5, a vector comprising the said nucleic acid molecule, including vectors recited in instant claim 49, and further comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding at least one HLA class I molecule, including HLA-A2.1, a host cell comprising the said vector, a kit comprising the vector and an immunostimulatory molecule, including GM-CSF. There is insufficient disclosure in the specification on such an invention, i.e., one in which a the nucleic acid molecule comprises a nucleic acid sequence encoding a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is one of SEQ ID NO: 2-5, vector, host cell and kit thereof.

As to the issue of *comprising* or *comprises*, the specification does not disclose flanking sequences for SEQ ID NO: 2-5, nor nucleic acid molecules that encode polypeptides *comprising* SEQ ID NO: 2-5 with the exception of sequence encoding at least on HLA class I molecule. The disclosed use for the nucleic acid molecules is in cancer immunotherapy, by inducing a CTL immune response to CEA to the nucleic acid encoded agonist peptides SEQ ID NO: 2-5 (of parental peptide CAP-1 altered at non-MHC anchor residues) that will bind to HLA-A2.1 and elicit an immune response equal to or superior to the parental peptide (especially pages 6-8 at summary of the invention).

Art Unit: 1644

The specification does not disclose the definition of "immunostimulatory molecule", but originally filed claim 9 recites wherein the immunostimulatory molecule is selected from the group consisting of IL-2, B7.1, B7.2, ICAM-1, LFA-3, CD72, GM-CSF, TNF- α , IL-12, IL-6 and combinations thereof. The recited IL-2, IL-12, GM-CSF, TNF- α and IL-6 are cytokines, whereas the B7.1 and B7.2 are co-stimulatory molecules, and ICAM-1 and LFA-3 are adhesion molecules.

The art recognizes that for a peptide to be a T cell epitope, the length of the peptide is important for binding to HLA (along with the presence of anchor (or "motif") amino acid residues present within the peptide). The peptides that bind to class I molecules have a predominant length, i.e., a minimum of 8 or 9 amino acid residues for a class I MHC restricted T cell epitope peptide. A primary factor for this is that amino acid residues at the amino- and carboxy-termini of peptides binding to class I molecules interact with conserved amino acid residues in pockets ("A", "F") located at opposite ends of the binding groove of the class I molecule, giving rise to a common orientation of the peptides in the binding site (Engelhard at page 14, column 1, lines 16-27.) Thus, the amino acid residues at the peptides' termini make a network of hydrogen bonds with conserved residues on the sides and bottom of the peptide binding groove of class I molecules. These interactions are important for holding the peptides in the binding groove and for stabilizing the complex (Guo, et al at page 366, column 1 lines 1-10.) "...the preferred length (of the peptide) is determined by the minimum amount of peptide required to span the center of the binding site and optimize the interactions at the ends", but that the predominant length is 9 amino acid residues (Engelhard at page 14, column 1, lines 23-27). The minimum length for a peptide to be a T cell epitope for class II MHC is about 12 amino acid residues (Rammensee et al at page 181, column 2, first full paragraph).

In addition, the art recognizes that flanking sequences influence the processing and presentation of CTL epitopes (Eisenlohr et al, Shastri et al, Bergmann et al, Wang et al, Perkins et al, Theobald et al and Gileadi et al) and that immunodominance can be affected by the context of the epitope within the protein molecule and that junctional neoepitopes can be created (Perkins et al) or that immunodominant epitopes can be completely silenced by contiguous sequences (Wang et al).

The instant disclosure does not adequately describe the scope of the claimed genus, which encompasses a substantial variety of subgenera, including any nucleic acid molecule *comprising* any nucleic acid sequence encoding a polypeptide *comprising* one of SEQ ID NO: 2-5, and a kit further comprising any immunostimulatory molecule of any type. Since the disclosure fails to provide sufficient relevant identifying characteristics, and because the genus is highly variant, one of skill in the art would reasonably conclude that the disclosure fails to provide a representative number of species to describe the genus as broadly claimed.

Art Unit: 1644

9. Claims 47-56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for a nucleic acid consisting of a nucleic acid sequence/vector/host cell/kit thereof that encodes a polypeptide that is one of SEQ ID NO: 2-5 and optionally at least one HLA class I molecule and/or an immunostimulatory molecule that is one of IL-2, B7.1, B7.2, ICAM-1, LFA-3, CD72, GM-CSF, TNF- α , IL-12, IL-6 and combinations thereof, does not reasonably provide enablement for a nucleic acid molecule *comprising* a nucleic acid sequence encoding a polypeptide *comprising* an amino acid sequence of one of SEQ ID NO: 2-5, a vector comprising the said nucleic acid molecule, including vectors recited in instant claim 49, and further comprising a nucleotide sequence encoding at least one HLA class I molecule, including HLA-A2.1, a host cell comprising the said vector, a kit comprising the vector and an immunostimulatory molecule, including GM-CSF. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention commensurate in scope with these claims.

The specification has not enabled the breadth of the claimed invention because the claims encompass nucleic acid molecules *comprising* a nucleic acid sequence encoding a polypeptide *comprising* one of SEQ ID NO: 2-5, or a kit further *comprising* any immunostimulatory molecule, i.e., undisclosed flanking sequences for SEQ ID NO: 2-5 and undisclosed nucleic acid sequences encoding them. The state of the art is such that it is unpredictable in the absence of appropriate evidence whether the claimed nucleic acid molecules, vectors, host cells and kit thereof can be made and/or used.

As to the issue of *comprising*, the specification does not disclose flanking sequences for SEQ ID NO: 2-5, nor nucleic acid molecules that encode polypeptides *comprising* SEQ ID NO: 2-5. The disclosed use for the nucleic acid molecules is in cancer immunotherapy, by inducing a CTL immune response to CEA to the nucleic acid encoded agonist peptides SEQ ID NO: 2-5 (of parental peptide CAP-1 altered at non-MHC anchor residues) that will bind to HLA-A2.1 and elicit an immune response equal to or superior to the parental peptide (especially pages 6-8 at summary of the invention).

The specification does not disclose the definition of "immunostimulatory molecule", but originally filed claim 9 recites wherein the immunostimulatory molecule is selected from the group consisting of IL-2, B7.1, B7.2, ICAM-1, LFA-3, CD72, GM-CSF, TNF- α , IL-12, IL-6 and combinations thereof. The recited IL-2, IL-12, GM-CSF, TNF- α and IL-6 are cytokines, whereas the B7.1 and B7.2 are co-stimulatory molecules, and ICAM-1 and LFA-3 are adhesion molecules.

Art Unit: 1644

The specification provides no disclosure and it is unpredictable that peptides SEQ ID NO: 2-5: (1) would be correctly processed and would bind to an MHC molecule when present in a longer peptide of unknown length and flanked by amino acid sequences not present in the antigenic protein of origin, (2) and would be recognized by CTL.

The art recognizes that flanking sequences influence the processing and presentation of CTL epitopes (Eisenlohr et al, Shastri et al, Bergmann et al, Wang et al, Perkins et al, Theobald et al and Gileadi et al) and that immunodominance can be affected by the context of the epitope within the protein molecule and that junctional neoepitopes can be created (Perkins et al) or that immunodominant epitopes can be completely silenced by contiguous sequences (Wang et al). An undue amount of experimentation would be involved in determining longer peptides from the many possibilities that would be correctly processed, capable of binding to HLA and being recognized by CTL.

The art recognizes that for a peptide to be a T cell epitope, the length of the peptide is important for binding to HLA (along with the presence of anchor (or "motif") amino acid residues present within the peptide). The peptides that bind to class I molecules have a predominant length, i.e., a minimum of 8 or 9 amino acid residues for a class I MHC restricted T cell epitope peptide. A primary factor for this is that amino acid residues at the amino- and carboxy-termini of peptides binding to class I molecules interact with conserved amino acid residues in pockets ("A", "F") located at opposite ends of the binding groove of the class I molecule, giving rise to a common orientation of the peptides in the binding site (Engelhard at page 14, column 1, lines 16-27.) Thus, the amino acid residues at the peptides' termini make a network of hydrogen bonds with conserved residues on the sides and bottom of the peptide binding groove of class I molecules. These interactions are important for holding the peptides in the binding groove and for stabilizing the complex (Guo, et al at page 366, column 1 lines 1-10.) "...the preferred length (of the peptide) is determined by the minimum amount of peptide required to span the center of the binding site and optimize the interactions at the ends" , but that the predominant length is 9 amino acid residues (Engelhard at page 14, column 1, lines 23-27).

There is insufficient guidance in the specification as to how to make and/or use instant invention. Undue experimentation would be required of one skilled in the art to practice the instant invention. See In re Wands 8 USPQ2d 1400 (CAFC 1988).

Art Unit: 1644

10. For the purpose of prior art rejections, the filing date of the instant claims 52-55 is deemed to be the filing date of the instant application, i.e. 12/3/03, as the parent applications do not support the claimed limitations of the instant application as enunciated at item #7 of this Action. For the purpose of prior art rejections, the filing date of the instant claims 47-51 and 56 is deemed to be the filing date of the 60/061,589 parent application, i.e., 10/10/97.

11. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

12. Claims 52 and 54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US 2004/0019195 A1.

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not the invention "by another," or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses a vector comprising a nucleic acid sequence that that encodes a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of at least three costimulatory molecules and further comprises the amino acid sequence of a target antigenic peptide such as the CAP-1D peptide, or YLSGADLNL which is SEQ ID NO: 24 of US 2004/0019195 A1 and SEQ ID NO: 2 of the instant claims. US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses kits containing recombinant vectors comprising the said nucleic acid molecules. US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses a kit for use in making a recombinant poxvirus comprising a plasmid vector that comprises the said nucleic acid sequence (see entire document especially abstract, [0001], [[0021]-[0025], [0029][0037], [0046], [0018], [0011], [0120]-[0121], [0123][0138], [0141], [0146], Table 1, [0157], [0166], claims 1819, 26, 27, 35, 3668, 68-73).

13. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 1644

14. Claims 52-55 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over US 2004/0019195 A1 in view of US 2005/0101559 A1.

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art only under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) might be overcome by: (1) a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not an invention "by another"; (2) a showing of a date of invention for the claimed subject matter of the application which corresponds to subject matter disclosed but not claimed in the reference, prior to the effective U.S. filing date of the reference under 37 CFR 1.131; or (3) an oath or declaration under 37 CFR 1.130 stating that the application and reference are currently owned by the same party and that the inventor named in the application is the prior inventor under 35 U.S.C. 104, together with a terminal disclaimer in accordance with 37 CFR 1.321(c). This rejection might also be overcome by showing that the reference is disqualified under 35 U.S.C. 103(c) as prior art in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). See MPEP § 706.02(I)(1) and § 706.02(I)(2).

US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses a vector comprising a nucleic acid sequence that that encodes a polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence of at least three costimulatory molecules and further comprises the amino acid sequence of a target antigenic peptide such as the CAP-1D peptide, or YLSGADLNL which is SEQ ID NO: 24 of US 2004/0019195 A1 and SEQ ID NO: 2 of the instant claims. US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses that the nucleic acid sequence in the vector may also encode a cytokine such as GM-CSF, IL-2 or IL-12, that the costimulatory molecules may be B7.1, B7.2, ICAM-1, LFA-3 and that the vector may be a poxvirus such as orthopox, vaccinia, avipox, suipox or capripox or adenovirus. US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses that host cells may be engineered to express MHC class I molecules for appropriate presentation to CD8+ T cells. US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses kits containing recombinant vectors comprising the said nucleic acid molecules. US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses pharmaceutical compositions comprising the recombinant vectors and additionally comprising exogenously added immunostimulatory molecules such as GM-CSF. US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses a kit for use in making a recombinant poxvirus comprising a plasmid vector that comprises the said nucleic acid sequence (see entire document especially abstract, [0001], [[0021]-[0025], [0029][0037], [0046], [0018], [0011], [0120]-[0121], [0123][0138], [0141], [0146], Table 1, [0157], [0166], claims 1819, 26, 27, 35, 3668, 68-73).

US 2004/0019195 A1 does not disclose wherein the kit includes a protein immunostimulatory molecule such as GM-CSF.

US 2005/0101559 A1 discloses pharmaceutical kits for the treatment of a disorder of a subject, said kits including the nucleic acid to be administered contained in a viral vector dissolved in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, and further including other therapeutic agents that may be co-administered with the nucleic acid (especially [0064]).

Art Unit: 1644

It would have been prima facie obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have substituted the pharmaceutical composition comprising a vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule encoding the CAP-1D peptide (SEQ ID NO: 2 of the instant claims) along with the immunostimulatory molecule GM-CSF in place of the viral vector comprising a nucleic acid molecule and other therapeutic agents to be co-administered with the nucleic acid molecule in the kit disclosed by US 2005/0101559 A1.

One of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have been motivated to do this because it was a well known convention in the art to place these components in a kit for convenience and economy and US 2005/0101559 A1 discloses pharmaceutical kits for the treatment of a disorder of a subject, said kits including the nucleic acid to be administered contained in a viral vector dissolved in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, and further including other therapeutic agents that may be co-administered with the nucleic acid and US 2004/0019195 A1 discloses pharmaceutical compositions comprising the recombinant vectors and additionally comprising exogenously added immunostimulatory molecules such as GM-CSF.

15. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Art Unit: 1644

16. Claims 47-49 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of double patenting over claims 18, 26 and 27 of copending Application No. 10/406,317. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the vector of instant claims 48 and 49 are nucleic acids that comprise the nucleic acid of instant claim 47, and the vector of '317 is also a nucleic acid that comprises a nucleic acid that comprises a nucleic acid sequence encoding SEQ ID NO: 2 of the instant claims (SEQ ID NO: 24 of '317). Also, although the vector of the '317 claims 18, 26 and 27 also comprise additional coding sequences, the claim language of instant claims 47-49 contains the open transitional phrase "comprising". Instant claim 49 is included in this rejection because the poxviruses orthopox, avipox, capripox and suipox are obvious variants of vector as evidenced by claims 11 and 14 of '317.

This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not yet been patented.

17. Claims 47-49 are directed to an invention not patentably distinct from claims 18, 26 and 27 of commonly assigned application serial no. 10/406,317, as enunciated at item #16 supra.

18. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office normally will not institute an interference between applications or a patent and an application of common ownership (see MPEP § 2302). Commonly assigned ***, discussed above, would form the basis for a rejection of the noted claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) if the commonly assigned case qualifies as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) and the conflicting inventions were not commonly owned at the time the invention in this application was made. In order for the examiner to resolve this issue, the assignee can, under 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and 37 CFR 1.78(c), either show that the conflicting inventions were commonly owned at the time the invention in this application was made, or name the prior inventor of the conflicting subject matter.

A showing that the inventions were commonly owned at the time the invention in this application was made will preclude a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based upon the commonly assigned case as a reference under 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g), or 35 U.S.C. 102(e) for applications filed on or after November 29, 1999.

19. The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware of in the specification.

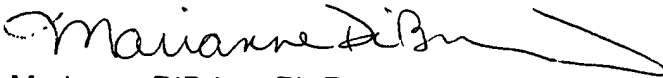
Art Unit: 1644

20. The listing of references in the specification is not a proper information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.98(b) requires a list of all patents, publications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office, and MPEP § 609 A(1) states, "the list may not be incorporated into the specification but must be submitted in a separate paper." Therefore, unless the references have been cited by the examiner on form PTO-892, they have not been considered.

21. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Marianne DiBrino whose telephone number is 571-272-0842. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Christina Y. Chan, can be reached on 571-272-0841. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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